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Short Subjects: News Reels

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News Reels

Fifteen state and local government archives—including the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives, Public Records Division (PRD); the Georgia Department of Archives and History; and the Alabama Department of Archives and History—have successfully completed the first six months of the Government Records Project, funded by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC). The grant allowed these fifteen institutions to input descriptive information into the Research Libraries Information Network (RLIN), a national bibliographic database used by many major research libraries in the United States. While PRD staff were being trained, programmers at RLIN were working to convert PRD's SPINDEX database and the Kentucky Guide Project SPINDEX database to the MARC format for Archives and Manuscript Control (MARC AMC).

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In the spring of 1988 the University of Louisville Archives (Louisville, KY) received a grant from the Kentucky Foundation for Women to create and improve finding aids for its collections of women's materials. Now, halfway through the project, the Gerta Bendl papers and the historical records of the Business and Professional Women of Kentucky, 1921-1985, are complete. The files of the League of Women Voters of Louisville, 1920-1980, are accessible via computer. Currently, work is progressing on the Sara Landau papers.

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Editors of the *Papers of Jefferson Davis*, Lynda Laswell Crist and Mary Seaton Dix, announced that volume seven in a planned fourteen-volume series is nearing completion and will be sent to publishers soon after centennial observances in 1989. Crist and Dix have spent the past twenty years editing the papers, a project begun at Rice University twenty-five years ago. Volume seven will document events leading to Davis's being chosen to lead the Confederacy in early 1861. Crist anticipates that the series will be completed in about another twenty years.

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The Georgia Department of Archives and History Director Edward Weldon was appointed by Georgia Governor Joe Frank Harris to a twenty-one member State Mapping Advisory Board. The board is charged with the responsibility for recommending

ways of updating the land records and information systems used by both state and local governments in Georgia. One responsibility of the new board will be to recommend specifications and standards for collection and distribution of data. It is to submit a report within a year.

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The Original Montgomery County Historical Society, Inc., is a unique group of southeast Georgians who are trying to capture the history of a county that comprised all or a portion of ten present-day Georgia counties. Few county historical societies have attempted this kind of documentation of their "pre-creation" history. This society has commissioned two works: an accurate map of the county's original boundaries and the writing of the county's first history. Montgomery County was created by an act of the Georgia legislature passed 19 December 1793.

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Jane Pairo, formerly Assistant State Archivist at the Virginia State Library and Archives, has been named the first Manager of the Preservation Program at the Southeastern Library Network (SOLINET). "Jane's leadership in this new position will provide the management focus needed to expand the program," notes Executive Director Frank Grisham. "An immediate benefit is that Lisa Fox, who has been serving as Coordinator, can now concentrate her energies in her new role as Program Development Officer." Ms. Fox served as Coordinator of the Preservation Program since its establishment in 1985. As the

Program Development Officer, she will be responsible for training, outreach, and initiation of new preservation services.

Sandra Nyberg will continue as Field Services Officer, with emphasis on a proposed cooperative microfilming project with the Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL) in addition to her training and consulting activities.

SOLINET's Preservation Program, funded in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities Office of Preservation, is one of the most active in the nation. Services range from training and publications to disaster assistance and a reference service. A special focus is coordination and support for emerging statewide preservation efforts.

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The Florida State Historical Advisory Board has received a grant from the NHPRC for its grant proposal "Information Technology and Public Records: Emerging Issues." The purpose of the project is to examine and focus attention on current and emerging policy issues which, regardless of technical solutions, will have to be resolved by state and local governments' record custodians. The results of the study will be published as a primer of the policy and operational issues which must be considered when opting to use a new technology in the creation, keeping, and retrieval of public records. The publication will be directed to public administrators, records custodians, archivists, and records managers.

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The Lakeland (Florida) Public Library announces the approval of a grant by the Florida Endowment for the Humanities. Entitled "Pilots in the Sun: Civilian Pilot Training Schools, 1940-1945, Lakeland and Avon Park, Florida," this grant will allow the library to construct a traveling photographic exhibit which will open at the library in September 1990.

The project will commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Lodwick School of Aeronautics in Lakeland. In addition to framed photographs there will be an exhibit catalog with brief histories of the pilot schools in Lakeland and Avon Park, as well as oral histories of former pilots, instructors, and personnel of the two schools.

The Lakeland school was the outgrowth of one of the nine original schools in the Civilian-AAF (Army Air Force) Pilot Training Program. The program was a significant force in building this country's air strength, which in turn helped win the war. The two schools trained more than 10,000 pilots, 1,200 of whom were British.

For further information, please contact: Hal Hubener, Project Director, Lakeland Public Library, 100 Lake Morton Drive, Lakeland, FL 33801, (813) 686-2168.

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The Louisiana State University Libraries received a grant of \$66,140 from NHPRC to underwrite part of the cost of the University Records Survey Project. The grant funds will pay salary for two years for a university archivist, who will survey the existing records of the university and prepare a record group and series structure for them. In cooperation with the Louisiana Division of Archives, Records Management, and History, the

archivist will devise retention and disposition schedules for the university records and prepare a records management manual for the campus. The University Records Survey Project is under the direction of Robert S. Martin, assistant director of libraries for special collections. The archivist will report to Faye Phillips, head of the Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, which includes the University Archives.

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The New York State Archives and Records Administration has announced the passage in 1989 of legislation establishing the New York Local Government Record Management Improvement Fund. The new fund is expected to generate five to ten million dollars per year to improve archives and records administration in local government statewide. The agenda of local government needs and recommendations for how they should be met are contained in *Quiet Revolution: Managing New York's Local Government Records in the Information Age*, the December 1987 report of the New York Local Government Records Advisory Council. The fund will be used to address these needs.

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Margaret Hedstrom of the New York State Archives and Records Administration has been awarded the first Award for Excellence in Government Information Services by the New York State Forum for Information Resource Management. Hedstrom shared the award with James Tansey of the Division of Substance Abuse

Services. The award recognizes their work on a project to develop a "sourcebook" that will inventory and catalog information in New York's health and mental health agencies and include descriptions of historical records from the State Archives and demographic information from the State Data Center.

Hedstrom and Tansey led the Forum Information Clearinghouse Project Team successfully to obtain a \$32,000 grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission for the sourcebook pilot project. When completed, the sourcebook will provide information such as data content, source, media, special characteristics, and availability on projected 250-300 automated information systems and related paper files. The sourcebook will be produced as a printed reference and as a searchable electronic database. The project will also assess policy issues that affect sharing and dissemination of state government information. A recommendation for this kind of project was included in the State Archives and Records Administration's 1988 publication, *A Strategic Plan for Managing and Preserving Electronic Records in New York State Government*.

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The American Association for State and Local History (Nashville, TN) Technical Information Service has published a report from the Common Agenda Database Task Force. The task force was charged with developing two essential tools to manage the data of historical collections and facilitate information exchanges between collections. One of these tools provides a format to describe the scope of a group of related objects--an entire collection, a part of a collection, or even an exhibit. The other

tool is a group of basic categories of information—data fields—that could be used to record historical data about objects effectively.

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The United States Senate passed by voice vote S.J.Res. 57 on 31 July 1989. This legislation would establish a national policy to promote the use of permanent, alkaline papers. A similar bill in the House, H.R.J.Res. 226, is still pending before committees. In a hearing conducted spring of 1989 in the House of Representatives, witnesses testified that the deterioration of the acidic papers in archives and libraries can be avoided in the future by the use of alkaline printing and papers. There is also evidence that alkaline paper, which will last several hundred years, can be produced at no greater cost than acidic papers. American publishers have already begun to convert to alkaline paper. Approximately a quarter to a third of American hardcover books are now printed on permanent paper, although this is usually not noted in the publications themselves.

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The Working Group on Standards for Archival Description, sponsored by Harvard University and funded by a grant from the NHPRC, announces that the fall 1989 issue of *The American Archivist* (volume 52, number 4) will be devoted entirely to

archival description standards and the work of the Working Group. It will include:

- 1) the full text of the Working Group's final report which contains an analysis of the practice of archival description and the implications of developing and implementing description standards;
- 2) seventeen specific recommendations to the archival community that focus on establishing procedures within the profession for standards development and review;
- 3) the texts of twelve background papers prepared by various members of the Working Group as the basis for its deliberations;
- 4) a checklist of existing technical standards, conventions, and guidelines that are applicable to archival description; and
- 5) a select bibliography of articles and books discussing the practice of archival description, the application of standards, and related issues.

The expected production schedule for the issue should make it available by early April 1990. Those who are not SAA members or anyone else wishing to purchase this special issue of *The American Archivist* will be able to do so at the single-issue cost of \$15.00 plus postage. For further information contact Teresa M. Brinati, Managing Editor, Society of American Archivists, 600 South Federal, Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60605.

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Three new Fellows were named by the Society of American Archivists (SAA) at its 53rd annual meeting in St. Louis. Richard Cox, Maygene Daniels, and Terry Eastwood received the society's

highest honor. Established in 1957, this distinction is awarded to a limited number of individuals for their outstanding contributions to the archival profession.

These three new Fellows join 104 other members so honored. The SAA Professional Standards Committee evaluates nominees on the following criteria: appropriate academic education and professional and technical training; a minimum of seven years professional experience in any of the fields advancing the society's objectives; writing of superior quality and usefulness in advancing the society's objectives; and contributions to the archival profession through work in and for the society.

Fellows are elected by three-quarters vote of the SAA Professional Standards Committee, which consists of the five most recent presidents of the society and two members elected annually by SAA officers and council.

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Former U.S. Senator Thomas F. Eagleton received the first J. Franklin Jameson Award given by the Society of American Archivists. The award, named in honor of the historian and advocate for the archival profession, recognizes an individual, institution, or organization, not directly involved in archival work, that promotes greater public awareness of archival activities or programs.

Senator Eagleton, a Missouri Democrat, was a leader in the movement to restore the National Archives and Records Administration to an independent position. He was convinced that it was good public policy to have a strong archival agency independent of political domination to preserve the historical heritage of this nation. His tireless efforts also defeated repeated attempts by others to politicize the office of archivist of the United States.

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Scott Cline, the Seattle (Washington) City Archivist, has received the C. F. W. Coker Prize from the Society of American Archivists for editing the publication, *A Guide to the Archives of the City of Seattle*. Established in 1985 and conferred annually in the fall, the award recognizes outstanding finding aids and innovative development in archival descriptive tools.

The 242-page *Guide* describes nearly 600 records series and includes a 2,300-term subject and name index. It is the first comprehensive, collection-level finding aid published using MicroMARC: AMC--which won SAA's Coker Prize in 1988. To date, it represents the largest form report project utilizing the software and, as a result, is a model for other Micro-MARC: AMC users in their planning for future finding aids.